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The transformative potential of religious- digital communication - the example of an Instagram account as 'networked theology'

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GoNeDigiTal Online Conference 2021 How Digitality Disrupts Theology**14-16 July 2021****Area 1: How digital theology alters/augments theology****The transformative potential of religious-digital communication - the example of an Instagram account as 'networked theology'***Prof. Dr Thomas Schlag / Dr Sabrina Müller, University of Zurich, Switzerland***Introduction**

In the context of digital religion and digital theology research, the assumption is repeatedly made that theology itself could be altered, changed or transformed as a result of digitalisation and digital religious practice. In our presentation we want to pursue this assumption in three steps: Firstly, we will explore the meaning of the term and concept "transformation" by asking what heuristic and criteriological potential this conceptual term may have for the analysis of this kind of digital religious practice. Secondly, through an empirical field study of the German-language Instagram account "Herz.Netz.Werk" ("Heart.Net.Work"), the participative elements and theological semantics of this concept will be examined. This account, created by a Protestant female pastor, and followed by almost 7000 people, focuses on dialogical and networked participation regarding everyday, existential and religious questions of life using various formats (like impulses, stories, commentaries, etc.). As a concrete example, we will analyse the communicative dynamics emerging in reaction to the impulse "My most important song, when I grieve...". In particular, we will take a closer look at those elements of communication that can be understood explicitly and implicitly as "theological" (or at least as open to theological interpretation) (2.). Thirdly, the empirical analysis and conceptual exploration will be connected in a hermeneutic, theological-pneumatological perspective with the question of the transformative potential of religious-digital communication practice. For this, the figure of a "networked theology" will be further developed within the horizons of theological-participative communication as a specific mode of reciprocal resonance (3.).

1. The logics of transformation

In this first part of our paper we explore the meaning of the term and logics of "transformation" by asking what heuristic and criteriological potential this conceptual

term may have for the analysis of digital religious practice:

The meaning of transformation is multifaceted and, depending on the disciplinary approach taken, can subsume highly diverse phenomena: In the social, socio-political and cultural sciences, transformation refers to the change of certain framework conditions towards a new, for example socio-political or cultural, overall constellation, including the associated patterns of action on the part of the actors involved.¹ "The prefix 'trans' means transgressing, i.e. a change of identity, a turning away from the familiar patterns of problem-solving in politics, the economy and private consumption."² In an ecological sense, an equally comprehensive counter-steering transformative change process is called for in the context of comprehensive climate change.³ In a psychological and philosophical sense, transformation refers to the change of a certain state of consciousness and or cognition or of one's own identity, and not least through certain sublimation or conversion processes.⁴

In the context of current digitalisation processes, we also find reflections on their possible transformative character, which is then located both at the level of the individual and of society and entails considerable ethical consequences.⁵

For our specific approach in this paper, the theological dimension of transformation is also relevant: Transformation, in the sense of the figure of the Kingdom of God, encompasses both the earthly and the transcendent dimension. Thus, the hope for a comprehensive and final transformation already reaches into the present and influences it. Transformation in the theological sense denotes at the same time the divine authorship and the human response to this given experience.

Thus, the element of the passive and the active intertwine in a deep and resonant sense. The incarnationally manifested and Spirit-empowered dynamic of the new thus influences all human existence in a fundamental way - this applies in a special way to the biblical meaning of the new creation of man and the entire cosmos that overcomes "the old" and death (2 Cor 5:17).

With regard to the "earthly" side of this promised becoming new, the individual and the community of believers are thus called and empowered to bring this transformative power to light and sound in different forms and spaces of resonance, in praise and lament, individually and in forms of communal life.⁶

In addition, other biblical motifs are helpful interpretative categories for the dynamics of transformation: "The biblical motifs of the Sabbath, of comprehensive shalom, of the

marriage of the Lamb and of the heavenly Jerusalem are images of such completion, which simultaneously transcend and enable the inner-historical striving for reconciliation and completion. The forms of expression of the content of these resonances can be grasped according to their promise and claim in the double commandment of love of God and love of neighbour. Thus, theologically: "It is about a change that does not only concern individual areas or contents, but that changes the form of being-in-the-world as a whole."⁷ In a non-theological language, this dimension of meaning can be formulated in the future perfect tense: "What will have been (important) in the end?"⁸

What these different disciplinary descriptions of transformation and the logics of it have in common is the following:

Transformation encompasses a particular object or state of affairs that is transformed in the sense that "something 'crosses over' from its original realm into another".⁹ Transformation raises the question of the originators, causes, as well as effects and impacts on the respective individual and /or social conditions. The meaning of transformation refers both to the level of the individual and to the entire social and global circumstances in a world-ecumenical sense.

At the same time, this raises the question of how fundamental or radical and sustainable the respective transformation is in terms of the associated effects and impacts. Here, for example, the question comes into play whether the respective transformation is associated with a more evolutionary or more revolutionary dynamic.¹⁰

This can also be linked to the dispute about whether the individual case is really a transformation or merely a kind of development process in a pre-existing framework, in other words: whether transformation is more of a processual or a disruptive category. This then also raises the question of what specifically constitutes the concept of transformation, for example compared to concepts such as development, progress, innovation, change, reversal or becoming new.

It should also be pointed out that transformation does not necessarily have to be comprehensively visible; rather, it is quite conceivable that certain transformation dynamics and effects are not necessarily as clear to the external observer as they are to the person who is experiencing this dynamic.

In what sense can we now speak of digital theology altering or augmenting theology at all?

Using an example, we will now look in more detail into some of these transformational experiences and show what is being transformed and where. At least in this example, one finds classical Christian concepts that are used in digital religious communication. Specifically, the transformation of communication, but not of content, the new public confessional character, the theological interpretative competence of people and the dissolution of profane and sacred in the sense of a - possibly transformative - [11](#) everyday transcendence come into focus.

2. The heart.net.work - an example of theological participation in the digital church

The Herz.Netz.Werk (Heart.Net.Work) is an Instagram account with just under 7,000 followers that was founded by the German pastor of the Northern Church (Nordkirche) Josephine Teske in March 2020.^{[12](#)} Heart.Net.Work has a subtitle that is also its programme: "From all of us. For all of us." As the name suggests, the Herz.Netz.Werk is based on a network logic and wants to be part of the [#digitalekirche](#)^{[13](#)}. The description of the account reads as follows: "A project created by everyone who wants to tell and share about faith. No matter how, when, with what experience." The Herz.Netz.Werk was explicitly founded so that people can network here in order to "live" and "be church" digitally. Followers are invited to contribute with music, prayers, pictures, texts and creative ideas. This gives followers a platform to live and share their faith digitally.

What is striking is that people usually become active on the account when Josephine Teske starts a new activity, especially on a topic or a Christian holiday. So far, the account has had the greatest response in November 2020, when the focus was on the topic of loss, death and mourning.

The aim of our analysis is not to analyse all 149 posts on this account, especially because the stories that have already been deleted are more meaningful (the devotions and conversations were only visible in the stories). Instead, we want to take a closer look at one of her posts with 100 comments as an example.

The contribution comes from the series "and when you have comforted yourself". In this series there were contributions from mourners and volunteers, from pastors and suicide experts, from mothers of so-called star children and many more. Central to this

series were songs and song texts, and it is precisely such song texts that this article and its 100 comments are about.

A lyric by the German-language medieval folk-rock band "Schandmaul" from the song "Euch zum Geleit" (To accompany you) was posted by Josephine Teske, and this was combined with a picture of a stormy sea:

I'm fine now.

I am grateful for everything.

For every step.

If you want to see me, close your eyes.

If you want to hear me, listen to the wind.

If you want to see me,

look at the stars.

If you want to hear me,

come to the river.

The following text by Josephine Teske was written under this picture: "From 'Euch zum Geleit' by Schandmaul. A very popular song for funerals and church services. Do you know it? Today, the network will be about music that accompanies us. That comforts. Or music that you can no longer listen to because it hurts too much. For me it's 'Lila Wolken' ("Purple Clouds") by Marteria. Cry every time. But I feel safe in the song 'Eisberg' ("Iceberg") by Andreas Bourani. And you?" So people were actively invited to comment and thus participate. As already mentioned, this post was commented on 100 times.

From a methodological point of view, we now open-coded these comments using a computer-assisted¹⁴ coding process.¹⁵ In the process, inductive¹⁶ topic clusters were formed and these were evaluated in terms of content analysis. Slightly more than 200 codes were set and three topic clusters could be formed. Since the topic of this article was death and mourning, it is not surprising that one topic cluster could be formed specifically on the topic "funeral service and death". The second topic cluster with the most codes was formed on the "meaning of songs" and the third on "theological interpretation and meaning". What is striking about the commentaries is that they do

not refer to each other very much. Thus, the mode of this commentary column is that of sharing rather than discourse. In the following, we explain these three thematic clusters within the horizons of the transformative logics of digital theologising.

1.1 Funeral service / death

The theme cluster "funeral service and death" comprises three segments: "played at own funeral service", "died too soon" and "own funeral". Many of the songs mentioned in the comments evoke memories of the funeral service of a loved one because the song was played or sung during the funeral service. In the case of older people, or where farewells to grandparents were described, reference is made more to traditional songs such as "Von guten Mächten" ("By good forces") (D. Bonhoeffer). These were sung at the funeral service or were among the grandparents' favourite songs. There is an entire segment on the topic of "dying too soon". Here it becomes apparent that many more pop songs are mentioned that the person liked during his or her lifetime or that are closely linked to memories. This is shown by the following comment: "'Sailing' was our song that brought us together, my husband and me. When he died three years ago, I didn't want to listen to it for a long time, but now it's working again and I 'understand' the lyrics in a completely different way..." or "LaFee - 'Wo bist du' ('Where are you'). I cry every time, every time I miss my mother, the pain of losing her so early is huge." (pos 130)

What is also noticeable is that the songs mentioned about death and mourning are also related to one's own death and funeral service. It becomes apparent that songs that look back positively on life are more desired, i.e. songs that do not only focus on death, but also celebrate life. For example, the song "Das Leben ist schön" ("Life is beautiful") by Sara Connor was mentioned. In talking about grief and the funeral, a new communal communication culture of mourning and grief sharing becomes visible, where public mourning becomes possible again. In addition, it becomes apparent that the songs increase in importance when they are closely linked to experiences with the deceased person or were played at the funeral service.

1.2 Meaning of the songs

Songs seem to have a great significance for mourners, this is even visible in the short comments. It is noticeable that there are at least three dynamics of meaning:

1. Songs as support for emotions:

The aforementioned songs provide the commentators with a safe ground for emotions and tears. It is precisely through their temporal limitation, their lyrical form and their ritualising and rhythmising component that they give mourning a temporal and a verbal framework. In the following example, this is clearly delimited by the singing of a stanza: "We sang 10.000 Gründe (10,000 Reasons) (Outbreak Band) at my grandma's funeral. The last verse always captures me very much: "And when the strength fades at the end, when my time has come, my soul will continue to praise you for ten thousand years and for eternity." When I sing this, I always think of my granny ♥." (Pos 154)

Songs provide a framework for mourning and at the same time the songs mentioned in the comments convey comfort, security, hope and peace to the followers of Herz.Netz.Werk and accompany the mourners in their lives. With the *mourning songs*, emotions are channelled and supported: "The Rose. This song always makes me cry. It was sung at my aunt's wedding and just ten years later at her funeral. ☹ For that, "Von guten Mächten" always gives me strength." (Pos 297)

2. Connectedness with the deceased:

Through the songs, the past becomes part of the present and the relationship to the deceased person is maintained and envisioned: "[...]with Unheilig "Ein großes Leben" ("A great life") I suddenly had the feeling in the middle of Paris that life goes on. And that she is telling me that it can go on. That she wants me to go on living♥ Greetings go up! ☺». (Pos190) In addition, the songs are described as a bridge between one's life story and death: "At my father's funeral I sang the song "Wir werden uns wiedersehen" ("We will meet again") by Arne Kopfermann. Since then, the song has meant an incredible amount to me. It radiates both sadness and hope." (pos 101) Thus, the songs take on an accompanying function in the lives of the commentators, as if the deceased person continues to accompany them in life through the song.

3. Memories

At the same time, memories are kept alive through the songs or half-forgotten memories are brought back. They work against forgetting and take on a unifying function in the different stages of life: "Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe' ('I pray to the power of love'). A favourite song of my grandfather, his choir sang it at the funeral. If it's still played or sung somewhere today it's all too late for me, then I can't stop crying ☹." (pos 289)

At the same time, however, the significance of the songs lies in the fact that they offer verbally formed interpretations which are then consulted by the commentators for personal and confessional interpretations. This will now be elaborated under a separate point that specifically focuses on the theological meaning or the theological interpretation of life, death and eternity made through the songs.

1.3 Theological interpretation

In the coding process, three theologically thematic fields emerged as essential for this data material, namely the "theological interpretation of death or the idea of heaven", "the confessional character" and the resolution of "profane and sacred" in the sense of everyday transcendence.

1) Theological interpretation of death - thoughts of heaven:

What is first noticeable is that the commentators are rather reticent about personal interpretations of death and eternity. The interpretation is not made by the commentators themselves, but is reflected in the songs or their selection. In concrete terms, this means that the commentators express their interpretation of life and death, their understanding of heaven, God and angels through the songs. Classical images are mostly used: either in the sense of: you are now in heaven, with God or in another place. Or they speak of accompaniment and guidance, specifically: you are now watching over me or over your loved ones as a star, angel or love. The presence of the deceased is also associated with places: "(The urn went into a tree grave, at the request of her parents) but she preferred a bench in her favourite place. Now any of the relatives friends and strangers can sit and talk to her. The bench is there now too, and it feels good to sit there on the hill with her. ☺» (Pos42)

Mostly, therefore, the interpretations only become recognisable if one also looks more closely at the song lyrics. For example, the song "Tears in heaven" by Eric Clapton is often mentioned. The sky is in any case a central image that is often consulted: "Ich fliege (or so) by marie meinberg. And it's probably both in one.... and with "don't you worry child see heavens got a plan for you" (i think the title is like different but yeah) calm and hope comes in me again." (Pos55)

2. Creed:

If one looks more closely at the song texts mentioned by the commentators, it becomes apparent that many have a kind of confessional character or can be described as a form of confession of faith. The songs mentioned support and sustain personal faith

and one's own interpretation of life with a classical frame of reference, for example: "The song 'Mögen Engel uns begleiten' ('May angels accompany us'), which also exists as a baptism and wedding song, conveys a lot of hope. Connected with the other two joyful days, it shows the carrying capacity of our faith in all situations of life. " (Pos190)

It is striking that the classical images of heaven, home, accompaniment, angels also come into play in the many pop songs mentioned. The fact that many songs refer to a life after death, eternity or an eternal home is perceived by the commentators as both self-evident and comforting hope. In addition to this, a pantheistic interpretive practice is also strengthened, namely that the deceased person can be found in the beauties of nature. As an example, we can refer to the song by Schandmaul "Euch zum Geleit" mentioned at the beginning (and often referred to).

3. *Everyday transcendence:*

The commentators refer to songs that correspond to their personal (theological) interpretation of contingency and death. A colourful mixture of pop songs and religious songs is visible in the songs listed: "High Hopes by Kodaline almost always makes me cry, shakes everything inside me. 10,000 Reasons also always makes me totally emotional, especially the last verse. Where I always feel better is Dancing in the Moonlight by Toploader and The Dock of the bay by Otis Redding, it makes me feel at home inside." (Pos 325) So, for example, "Tears in Heaven" stands next to the classical hymn "Von guten Mächten" and these songs in turn next to Bach's cello concerto.

Sacred and profane seem to coincide, and the classical difference is abolished. Holiness and transcendent moments are determined by being touched, i.e. by emotionality. In concrete terms, this means that in the midst of everyday life, sacred and healing moments arise through songs that comfort, give hope and connect a piece of eternity with the present.

What this connection looks like in explicit terms is beautifully visible in the song 'Supermarket Flowers' by the singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran. The well-known pop musician combines modern with classical imagery, and this is then also recognisable in the comments:

I took the supermarket flowers from the windowsill
I threw the day old tea from the cup
Packed up the photo album Matthew had made

Memories of a life that's been loved
Took the get well soon cards and stuffed animals
Poured the old ginger beer down the sink
Dad always told me, "Don't you cry when you're down"
But mum, there's a tear every time that I blink
Oh I'm in pieces, it's tearing me up, but I know
A heart that's broken is a heart that's been loved
So I'll sing Hallelujah
You were an angel in the shape of my mum
When I fell down you'd be there holding me up
Spread your wings as you go
And when God takes you back we'll say Hallelujah
You're home
Fluffed the pillows, made the beds, stacked the chairs up
Folded your nightgowns neatly in a case
John says he'd drive then put his hand on my cheek
And wiped a tear from the side of my face
I hope that I see the world as you did 'cause I know
A life with love is a life that's been lived
So I'll sing Hallelujah
You were an angel in the shape of my mum
When I fell down you'd be there holding me up
Spread your wings as you go

And when God takes you back we'll say Hallelujah

You're home

Hallelujah

You were an angel in the shape of my mum

You got to see the person I have become

Spread your wings and I know

That when God took you back he said Hallelujah

You're home [17](#)

Many of the comments and songs analysed contain similar thoughts to this song by Ed Sheeran, in which death is referred to as a homecoming. However, religious language is not always used as explicitly as in the case of this singer-songwriter. Ed Sheeran may not belong to the Christian music scene, but he nevertheless makes use of familiar religious imagery and language. His modern pop song is then in turn claimed as a form of confession of faith and interpretation of death by the participants of Herz.Netz.Werk.

3. Religious-digital communication practice as a specific mode of "networked theology".

The possibilities of participatory digital communication and its provided spaces, as we have illustrated in the example of individual song selection and song interpretation above, open up diverse and perhaps also completely new possibilities for transformative communication dynamics. In terms of content, as far as the claim of the Christian faith is concerned, no fundamentally new content comes into play. Rather, traditional images and interpretations are reactivated, especially through the songs, and creatively related to and integrated into one's own life. This is evident, for example, in the broad reception of heaven in the theological interpretation of death.

What is concretely changing, however, is the digital form of communication, through which, as has often been mentioned, place and time can be "re-formed", as it were, and strangers can come closer to each other through shared experiences.

What is also changing about the communication dynamic is its original institutionalised ecclesial form: the promise of consolation, of eternity and ultimately of blessing does not (any longer) come from the pulpit or the altar space, but comes from the participants and takes place through the shared songs. Theological interpretive

competence is here something that is claimed by "lay people" as an integral part of life, and this especially within the horizons of their everyday use, e.g. with regard to emotion regulation. Theology or theological interpretations become more everyday, in the sense that they are integrated into everyday life.

Moreover, communication about theological and religious content is becoming part of a public digital practice of sharing and participation. In other words, a traditionally and in a certain sense authoritatively proclaimed transformational practice now takes place on the part of those who are no longer professionally or academically theologically legitimised, but by the interpreting subjects themselves.

In the Instagram comments which we analyzed, it becomes apparent how a meaningful song breaks through the profanity of everyday life and gives sacred, transforming moments in the midst of life. These emotional moments enchant the situation in that the presence of the deceased person is felt in the form of memories and companionship, that heaven and home coincide as a comforting place, and that in grief, as in the song by Ed Sheeran, there is a "divine You" or force which comforts and with which the deceased person is lifted up.

What is fascinating and quite paradigmatic für digital transformational logics is that, in the digital communication of the Herz.Netz.Werk, this form of everyday transcendence is shared and integrated into the common communication processes as an everyday part of life. Religious (also traditional) contents and beliefs can thus become a topic in a new (maybe really disruptive) way and manifest themselves in common Christian faith processes and thus gain "new" shape and relevance in the sense of a participatory "networked theology".

In the sense of a digitally enhanced "circulation of religious consciousness", it can be assumed that precisely such networked religious communication in digital worlds opens up a considerable transformative potential of the Christian faith - both on an individual, communal and global-ecumenical level.¹⁸ At the same time, the "new view of things" that comes with these transformational dynamics brought about by God brings to light new forms of publicly recognisable and faith-based practice of discipleship.

However, it should also be remembered once again what we stated above: Transformation does not necessarily have to be comprehensively visible. Especially for digital forms of communication, it is true that certain transformation dynamics and effects are not necessarily as clear to external observers as they are to those who are

experiencing them and being affected by them. Transferred to the broad field of a "networked theology", this opens up interesting follow-up considerations for the question of visibility and invisibility, privacy and publicity, as well as articulation and intimacy of existential questions of faith.

Based on the abovementioned close connection between "passivity" and "activity" in all transformation processes, the Instagram commenting practice considered here can ultimately be interpreted as follows: In addition to the theological meaning of authorship of God in the sense of the promise of human faith, there is - within the framework of earthly possibilities - a formable co-action on the core questions of individual, communal and social life. The Instagram account we were looking at exemplarily and paradigmatically shows that digital communication possibilities open up a considerable transformative potential for the development of the self and the experience of transcendence.

Footnotes

1. *Thomas Meyer*, Die Transformation des Politischen, Frankfurt am M., 1994, who at the time already noted processes of the decline of the political, such as the loss of state sovereignty internally and externally, but also the decline of political language and the disappearance of an internal connection between politics and life, as well as the subjective tendencies of a surrender of the political in the self-isolation of the political class; see also, a whole epoch earlier, in a fundamentally critical orientation towards democratic parliamentarism and the demand for a fundamental change of the political system *Johannes Agnoli*, Die Transformation der Demokratie, Berlin 1967. [↩](#)
2. *Markus Vogt*, Transformation - Anmerkungen aus ethischer und theologischer Sicht (2012) (https://www.kaththeol.uni-muenchen.de/lehrestuehle/christl_sozialethik/personen/1vogt/texte_vogt/vogt_transformation.pdf) [↩](#)
3. The *German Advisory Council on Global Change* (WBGU) understands the sustainable global transformation of the economy and society in reference to K. Polanyi's formulation dating back to 1944 as a "Great Transformation" (Welt im Wandel. Gesellschaftsvertrag für eine Große Transformation. Zusammenfassung für Entscheidungsträger, 2011, 5). In the central transformation fields (energy, urbanisation, land use), production, consumption patterns and lifestyles must be changed in such a way that global greenhouse emissions can be reduced to an

absolute minimum in the course of the coming decades, and climate-compatible societies can emerge. [↵](#)

4. Interestingly, the implications of psychological consciousness processes are then in turn linked to aspects of the necessary global (consciousness) change, for example in the economist and psychiatrist *Stefan Brunnhuber*, *Die Kunst der Transformation. Wie wir lernen, die Welt zu verändern*, Freiburg 2016. [↵](#)

5.

Cf. *F. Höhne*, Transformation und Digitalisierung, in: *Tobias Faix/Tobias Künkler* (eds.), *Handbuch Transformation. Ein Schlüssel zum Wandel von Kirche und Gesellschaft*. Neukirchen-Vluyn 2021, who, referring to F. Stalder and P. Staab, makes the following conceptual attempt: "It is not technical progress in itself that is transformative, but the interplay of technical development, social use, cultural context and economic power relations", 295.

See now, however, especially *P.G. Kirschschläger*, *Digital Transformation and Ethics. Ethical Considerations on the Robotization and Automation of Society and the Economy and the Use of Artificial Intelligence*. Baden-Baden 2021, who calls "digital transformation" an "umbrella-concept", "coined in order to cover automation, mechanization, machinization, robotization, digitalization, the 'use of data-based-systems' and 'handling super-data-based-systems.'", 106f. Beyond these rather technical provisions, however, Kirschschläger sees the associated social and thus also ethical challenges: "Ever fewer humans will directly participate and partake in a more efficient and effective value chain", op. cit. [↵](#)

6. In this context, it would then also be theologically and church history-sensitive to address the extent to which the basic impetus of the Reformation itself can be rewritten as a form of theological transformation in digital times. [↵](#)

7. This is the focus of the research of the Chair for "Theology in the Transformation Processes of the Present" established at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt as the first DFG Heisenberg Professorship in Theology in the summer semester of 2016 (<https://www.ku.de/thf/theologie-in-transformationsprozessen-der-gegenwart/forschung>). Or also: *Sabrina Müller*, "Die transformierende Wirkung religiöser Erfahrung und die Genese gelebter Theologie", in: *Tobias Faix/Tobias Künkler* (eds.), *Handbuch Transformation. Ein Schlüssel zum Wandel von Kirche und Gesellschaft*. Neukirchen-Vluyn 2021, 256. [↵](#)

8. <https://www.ku.de/thf/theologie-in-transformationsprozessen-der-gegenwart/forschung> –
9. Rüdiger Gebhardt, «Ändert euch durch Erneuerung eures Sinnes!» Zur Leistungskraft des Begriffs der Transformation aus evangelischer Sicht, in: Tobias Faix/Tobias Künkler (eds.), Handbuch Transformation. Ein Schlüssel zum Wandel von Kirche und Gesellschaft. Neukirchen-Vluyn 2021, 185. –
10. Accordingly, the dictum of the already quoted Scientific Advisory Board here is: "Humanity's transformations to date have been largely uncontrolled outcomes of evolutionary change. The historically unique challenge in the transformation that is now imminent is to drive forward a comprehensive transformation based on insight, prudence and foresight." (op. cit., ibid.) –
11. Cf. Hubert Knoblauch, Populäre Religion. Auf dem Weg in eine spirituelle Gesellschaft, Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2009, 38-80; 265-284 –
12. Pastor Josephine Teske aka @seligkeitsdinge_ is one of the best-known Christian influencers (Sinnfluencer) of the Protestant Church in Germany. Her personal account now has (as of 3 July 2021) 27,4000 followers, which is an extremely large number for a German pastor who explicitly addresses being a pastor, the church, her everyday life and faith in a feminist-liberal and yet at the same time pious way. @seligkeitsdinge_ is known and loved for her direct, open and approachable manner. Thus, she does not gloss over life as a pastor and a single mother in any way, shows unwashed mountains of laundry, but at the same time skilfully links her everyday life, her hopes, dreams and powerlessness with theological questions and church practice. –
13. Under the hashtag #digitalekirche, people from Germany and Switzerland network and gather, celebrate and pray, discuss and theologise together. The hashtag hints at a new way of being a church and has established itself on Twitter, as well as on Instagram, and is understood as a complement or also as a contrast to the analogue local church, depending on the case in question. –
14. The computer software maxqda was used for this purpose. MAXQDA - Professionelle QDA Software Für Die Qualitative Datenanalyse - MAXQDA - The Art of Data Analysis', accessed 12 April 2021, <http://www.maxqda.de/>. –
15. Cf. e.g. Uwe Flick, *Qualitative Social Research: An Introduction* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: rororo, 2007), 386-402. –

16. In inductive coding, the codes are not created before the material is sifted, but are derived directly from the data set. Mayring calls this type of clustering summary content analysis. The aim is to narrow down the text elements into thematic clusters. See Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse: Grundlagen Und Techniken* (Weinheim / Basel: Beltz, 2010), 65. [↗](#)

17. Accessed 04.07.2021 Cf. https://www.google.ch/search?q=ed+sheeran+supermarket+flowers+lyrics&sxsrf=ALeKk03t0mX56z8QjiCRtnRFE_DknWR7u_Q%3A1625414569596&ei=qdvhYLXBI6T97_UP4_2v6AU&oq=ed+sheeran+super&gs_lcp=Cgdnnd3Mtd2l6EAMYATIFCAAQsAMyBQgAELADMgUIABCwAzIFCAAQsAMyCAgAELADEMsBMggIABCwAxDLATIFCAAQsAMyCAgAELADEMsBMggIABCwAxDLATILCC4QsAMQyAMQkwlyCwguELADEMgDEMsBSgUJOBIBMUoECEFYAVAAWABgph1oAXAAeACAAU-IAU-SAQExmAFAgqEHZ3dzLXdpegBC8ABAQ&scient=gws-wiz [↗](#)

18. On the latter, cf. *Uli Vilsmaier* and *Danilo Streck*, Das transformative Moment der Praxis. Paulo Freires Wegweiser für das Radikale, in: *Tobias Faix/Tobias Künkler* (eds.), *Handbuch Transformation. Ein Schlüssel zum Wandel von Kirche und Gesellschaft*. Neukirchen-Vluyn 2021, 83-97. [↗](#)